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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

I Moscoviti nella California o sia dimostrazione della verità del passo all'America settentrionale nuovamente scoperto dai Russi, e di quello anticamente praticato dalli Popolatori, che vi trasmigrarono dall'Asia. Dissertazione storico-geografica del Padre F. Giuseppe Torrubbia minore osservante di S. Francesco, cronologo di tutto l'ordine, e commissario general e della curia oltramontana. In Roma MDCCLIX. Per Generoso Salomoni Con lic. de' Sup. Small 8°. 83 pages.

This rare little work, of which few copies are in existence, although we know of three in California, namely, in the California State Library and in the collections of Mr. Huntington and Mr. Crocker, was written by one of the best known Spanish writers of the eighteenth century. Torrubbia was a Franciscan of great talent, who finally became the commissary general in both Spain and Rome of several of the Franciscan provinces in America and in the Philippines. He lived in the Philippines for a while, and in one part of the book he tells us that in 1733 he himself made a voyage from the Philippines to Acapulco with Cabrera Bueno. Besides a history of the Franciscan order he wrote numerous works dealing with ecclesiastical law or with church questions of one kind or another.

The work is almost entirely devoted to a discussion of the discoveries of the Russians on the northwest coast as interpreted and mapped by Buache and De Lisle. Incidentally he discusses the possible migration of the Aztecs from Tartary across Behring Strait and down the western coast. The book begins with an account of a Dutch story of a passage from the Bacalaos to the South Sea, and which passage they called the "Strait of Anian." He says that this relation fell into the hands of Philip III, who ordered the Count of Monterey, then the Viceroy in Mexico, to send an expedition to verify it, and he then proceeds to give an account of the voyage of Vizcaino. On page 34 he refers to the document from the Chinese obtained by De Guignes, from which Buache in 1752 constructed his famous map showing the voyage of Leao-tung to Fusang. On page 45 he states that 41° north latitude was considered the end of California, and that at that time the Russians had come down to 55°, as shown on De Lisle's map of 1752. Pages 47-64 contain an extract from De Lisle's pamphlet, which contains his account delivered before the Academy April 8, 1750, and printed in 1752. On page 66 he says that some Russians

passed through Behring's Straits in 1640, and intimates that the Prussians had concealed this fact in order to give the credit of this discovery to Behring, who passed through in 1728.

In no part of the book does Father Torrubia give any account of California, but undoubtedly the work was written with the object of calling the attention of the Spanish government to the steady advance of the Russians from the north and the possible danger of their occupation of California, although he does not state this in so many words. This little work must have had considerable influence at the Spanish Court in bringing about the decision to occupy Alta California, and thus place some kind of a limit to the march of the Russians southward.

Most of Father Torrubia's writings are in Spanish, and it is not known why this particular work was published in Italian; probably it was originally written in Spanish.